

RANDALL WILCOX HOUSE
DE PERE, WISCONSIN

H.A.B.S. No 28.20

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~~• PHOTOGRAPHS •~~

WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT No 28

Historic American Building Survey
Alexander C. Guth District Officer
1249 North Franklin Place, Milwaukee, Wis.

RANDALL WILCOX HOUSE
De Pere, Brown County, Wisconsin

Owner (or Custodian). Ellen Lawton Wilson

Date of Erection. 1837

Architect. Probably Randall Wilcox

Builder. Randall Wilcox

Present Condition. Well preserved.

Number of Stories. 1 & 2

Materials of Construction. Wood.

Other Existing Records. See text.

Additional Data. (See following pages)

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The Wilcox house is located on North Broadway between Morris Street and Ridgeway Boulevard in the city of DePere, Wisconsin. This house, which has been frequently referred to as "a bit of New England", was built in the year 1837. The original owner was Randall Wilcox, a New Englander by birth, who settled in Wisconsin in 1836. He was a builder and probably drew his own plans and superintended the building during the erection. The woodwork of the house was all produced in the city of Detroit while Mr. Wilcox was detained there for an enforced stay in 1836 - 37. From there it was shipped by boat to the city of DePere.

This house was at one time the social center of the town. Seven daughters and two sons made it fairly hum with activity. Four generations have dwelt within its walls. Nine weddings have taken place in the old house and also nine deaths. But never in its long life has there been a single birth in it. Those who were married in its spacious rooms have come back in later life to observe their golden weddings amidst the same surroundings. It has been written that "the Wilcox house was the home of broad genial hospitality and the Wilcox name the synonym of all that is honorable.

As for the house itself - it appears (1935) much as it did nearly 100 years ago in that few changes have been made. The front elevation is very formal indeed even though the main entrance is off-center. Five chimneys loom up on the outside, which tell of the large number of fireplaces to be found on the inside. The exterior details, such as the entrance, porches and main cornice are all in accordance with the best of traditional work of the eastern States.

In the interior the trim around the doors and windows is quite remarkable for its size, design and detail. Nowhere is this detail surpassed in richness and elegance. The same applies to the stately fireplaces. All in all the house is most charming and livable.

Alexander C. Guth
District Officer

(Revised by HABS Headquarters
September 9, 1935.)

Revised 1936 H.C.F.